

Wantage & Abingdon Circuit

CHILDREY, GROVE & WANTAGE SECTOR


The Methodist Church

CGW NEWS



August 2021

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Contributions for the **next Newsletter** should be sent to the editor by email, phone or in writing by **Sunday 15th August** to
wantage.sector.newsletter@gmail.com
Tel : 01235 766655 / 07710 214601
Editors : Gill & Gordon Skidmore

Sunday Services and Church Activities

Please see page 16 for the arrangements this month.

Wantage Morning Worship will be shared each week on Zoom at 10:30
(for access to these please contact Rev Keith Underhill)

Texts for Services at home for each Sunday are posted on the websites.

Grove web site is found from www.wantab.org.uk

Wantage web site www.wantagemethodist.org.uk

Circuit web site www.wantab.org.uk

Circuit YouTube channel

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBpMj71hDzpMhVj6t_ZQt0w

CGW News Publication deadline dates

| | |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|
| Late Summer | Sunday 15 th August |
| Harvest | Sunday 12 th September |
| Autumn | Sunday 3 rd October |
| November | Sunday 31 st October |
| Dec/Jan | Sunday 28 th November |

From the Manse.....

By fine margins and in the most cruel of fashions, the England Men's Football Team narrowly missed out on winning the Euro 2020 Championship. Nevertheless, they still managed to bring football home.

In a dignified and humble way, they restored not only our love for what is so often referred to as the 'beautiful game' but also reflected the values and compassion of our nation that have so often been conspicuous by their absence in recent years.

The whole squad reminded us of what is really important and what really matters. Young men from varied backgrounds and experiences, of differing ethnicities and cultures standing as one, reflecting the glorious make up that is modern England. In them we saw what could and should be, and recognised the clarion call for us all to be the best version of ourselves.

Just as on the pitch, so, too, off it. Time and time again they have stood up against racism, oppression and injustice. They have spoken with openness, honesty, integrity and feeling. They have told their stories and, in doing so, given a voice to so many who for so long thought that nobody understood or knew them.

They have shown true leadership with their words matching their actions and their support of those in need.

The abuse that so many of them have received in the past and to which they were subjected after the penalty shootout is as blasphemous as it is unacceptable and wrong.

After the final, an M.P. publicly wondered if perhaps a certain player should practise taking penalty kicks more instead of playing politics. Other people have suggested that there is no place for politics in sport.

Perhaps a better question to ask is what has happened to us as a nation when it takes the efforts of a young professional footballer to change a government's mind to ensure children do not go to bed hungry.

The church too has so often been criticised for being involved in politics, of sticking its collective nose where it does not belong. It was the late [Helder Câmara](#), one of the most distinguished Catholic Church leaders of the last century who said; "When I feed the poor they call me a saint. When I ask why so many people are poor they call me a communist."

Our calling, mission, discipleship and witness means that we cannot and must not be silent in the face of wrong-doing, that we are to be a voice for those who find themselves silenced and a light for those who find themselves in darkness.

To the England football team - "Thank you" and we too stand alongside you against the evils of racism, prejudice and injustice.

With love and God Bless

Keith

Conference confirms resolutions on marriage and relationships

Following prayerful consideration by the whole Church, the Methodist Conference has voted to confirm provisional resolutions on the principles or qualities of good relating, understanding of cohabitation and same sex marriages conducted on Methodist premises or by Methodist office-holders.



A report on marriage and relationships, 'God in Love Unites Us', was received by the Conference in 2019 and the local District Synods were asked to consider the provisional resolutions and report back to this year's Conference which is being held this week in Birmingham. The Conference received a report on the results of the local conferring which showed that 29 out of the 30 Synods confirmed support for the provisional resolutions.

The Revd Sonia Hicks, President of the Conference, prayed ahead of the main debate on Wednesday morning in Birmingham, asking that the Conference's "words may be imbibed with your grace, with tenderness from on high."

A range of views were expressed on the resolutions, in particular on cohabitation and same sex marriages. The Revd Dr Jonathan Hustler, spoke to the Conference acknowledging the "depth of feeling, pain and anxiety that there is" with a commitment to work across the Connexion with District Chairs to heal divisions.

Speakers called for unity going ahead irrespective of the decision. Other speakers spoke of the acceptance of diversity that younger Church members have for each other with younger speakers relating their own lived experience as Christians from the LGBTQI+ community. Another representative asked that the Church does not ostracise those who oppose the introduction of same-sex marriages in the Church, saying the great majority of these people are trying to be faithful to Scripture as they see it.

The Methodist Church included other denominations and Methodist Churches across the world in the process of listening and consultation, with written submissions from ecumenical partners to the 'God In Love Unites Us' report and workshops with global Methodist partners.

Following the vote on the provisional resolutions the Revd Sonia Hicks said: "The debate today and our wider conversation has been conducted with grace and mutual respect. As we move forward together after this historic day for our Church, we must remember to continue to hold each other in prayer, and to support each other respecting our differences."

"God in Love Unites Us (GiLUU) – Frequently asked questions" giving answers to some basic questions can be found on the church, circuit and connexional web sites

Pastoral letter from the President and Vice President of the Conference

1 July 2021

Dear Friends

We wished to take this opportunity to write to you after the Conference voted on the resolutions contained in the marriage and relationships report.

We very much appreciate that these decisions will stir up many different emotions for our siblings across the Connexion. There will be some who will be deeply hurt and others who will rejoice by what has been decided.

Our Presidential theme this year is God's Table: An Invitation for All, and God's invitation is for every single one of us. The Methodist Church has held tension for many years and as a Church and a family, we must do all we can to live with contradictory convictions.

This work was first reflected on back in 1992 and we have been on this journey together since that point. During the past years we have continued to listen to and to pray for each other and remaining true to what God is saying to us. We must remember in all this, to continue to hold each other in prayer, and to support each other as we find a way forward, respecting our differences.

It is perhaps helpful to remember that there are other issues, some of them discussed at the Conference, on which we hold differing and sometimes strong opinions. We live with them and we do not allow them to impair our communion with each other. We respect each other's consciences, we exercise judgment in when to speak and when to be silent, and we hold one another in prayer. We do all this not for our own sake but for the sake of Christ and the sake of the world which urgently needs to know the power of Christ's reconciling love.

Our prayer for you, beloved siblings, is that in joy or sorrow, in pain or excitement, we might continue to live within that reconciling love.

**The Revd Sonia Hicks and Mrs Barbara Easton
President and Vice President of the Conference**

What will happen in the Wantage & Abingdon Circuit?

It is expected that more advice on the detail of this will be published in the next few weeks.

There will be an open meeting in the circuit to share thoughts on the issues and options in the autumn followed by consideration and decisions by each Church Council to determine the practice in each Church.

Open as usual. 9:30 till 4:00 Monday to Friday. 10:00 to 3:00 Saturday. Please support the Cornerstone if you can.

The AGM is planned for 13th September at 7:30 pm.

Mon-Fri 9.30am-11, Sat 10am-11pm



Summer Holiday Family Breakfast Club

All Summer from **23rd July—3rd September**



Children who are entitled to free school meals and their family are invited to a **FREE** breakfast every day (except Sunday) during the school summer holidays.

Just bring this flyer (printed or electronic) and order at our counter.

There will be hot and cold options and different choices each week.

Children MUST be accompanied by an adult.

Cornerstone, 10 Savile Way, Grove, OX12 0PT
Tel: 01235 772280
Email: office@cornerstonegrove.org.uk



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Available all day.



A Pot of Tea or a Large Americano
Scone, Jam & Clotted Cream

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Available all day.

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Call 01235 772280 or e-mail office@cornerstonegrove.org.uk

(Please advise of any allergies on bookings)

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Registered Office: Grove House, Grove, Wantage. OX12 7PF Company No. 3060710 V.A.T. No.685-6254-96

Methodist Connexional Coronavirus Guidance for Property - 13 July 2021

Changes to Government Guidance

- One of the aims of the latest government communiqué is to **enable the public to make informed decisions**. We are keen ministers and leadership teams do likewise. We offer these guidelines to help you, and your leadership teams, make decisions linked to your local context.
- The Property Team will be reviewing more detailed Connexional guidance following the Prime Minister's update on the 12 July, and posting this from 19 July, when the Government will lift most restrictions.
- Although there are no specific updates to the government guidance document concerning places of worship yet, the Health Secretary announced to the House of Commons that from the 19 July there will be '...no restrictions on communal worship and singing'. This includes singing at weddings, funerals and baptisms.

What will the lifting of restrictions mean for churches and communal worship?

When government restrictions are removed, the emphasis will be on 'personal responsibility.' Currently, the Government is indicating that this will mean:

- No maximum numbers for meeting in any indoor or outdoor environments, including removing restrictions on group sizes attending communal worship.
- Communal singing can resume.
- All venues currently closed will be allowed to open.
- No restrictions on weddings, funerals or baptisms.
- No requirement for Covid-19 vaccination status certification to enter a venue.
- No legal requirement to wear a face covering, although it will be 'advised' for enclosed and crowded spaces.
- No social distancing rules, although the risks to those deemed vulnerable need to be considered.
- No need for 'Covid-secure' environments.
- Encouragement to continue good cleaning and hygiene procedures.

What does the Methodist Church advise?

The Methodist Church, whilst always adhering to government advice, is urging some caution for the sake of others in the church, community and for self-care.

Childrey

For the foreseeable future Childrey will be open for Worship on the 2nd and 4th Sundays in the month.

Sunday 8 August: 11:00 am led by Helen Carter

Sunday 22 August: 11:00 am led by Rev Keith Underhill

This service will include the sacrament of Holy Communion.

Prayers:

We remember in our prayers:

Pat Legge, Vicky, Robin and Becky and the Legge family grandchildren.

Keith, Leonora, Andrea, David, Joy Gee, Jean

and all those unknown to us who are in need of our help.

Christian Love to all.

THE BEST
OF ALL IS
GOD
IS WITH US.

Grove

Congratulations to Louisa Greenhalgh (Justin and Lois's daughter and granddaughter of Kay Parfrey) on graduating as a doctor from Warwick Medical School. Louisa is now starting F1/F2 (formerly called "houseman") in Edinburgh at the end of the week, with first rotations in anaesthetics in Livingston then cardiology and A&E at the Royal Infirmary. We wish her well with her continued training.

You are invited to a **Coffee Morning** on **Saturday, 14th August** at 10.00am in the garden of Linda and Mark Jones at 50A, Charlton Village Road, Wantage. Donations made at the Coffee morning will be for the work of Emmaus, who provide a home and meaningful work to those who have suffered homelessness and social exclusion in the UK. To find out more about the work of Emmaus please look on their website emmaus.org.uk. We hope you will join us to celebrate our first 'live' coffee morning since March 2020. If you are unable to join us but would like to make a donation, please put it in a sealed envelope marked "Emmaus" and hand in at church, or give to Roger Bett or Ian Sturt. Thank you.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Cancer Research U.K. Coffee morning in July. A total of £110 was raised. Thank you very much.

Sunday worship in church is open for all at 10:45 am and you are most welcome to come and share in it. It is necessary still to book a place in advance by telephoning Judith on 07887 995530. Covid rules continue to be followed, such as the wearing of face masks, hand sanitising and social distancing but worshipping together again is good. Our first service of Holy Communion on 6th July after such a long break, was a very special occasion. Thank you Keith for making it possible.

Film Club Peter Hemmings would like to know if there is interest in possibly resuming Film Club meetings again in September? If you are interested please let Peter know, by telephone 01235 762504 or email peterjhemmings@btinternet.com

We continue to hold in our prayers all those who are in poor health or have other difficulties and problems compounded by the very different time we have been living through. We are thankful that it is now possible to meet up with our families and friends again and hope that, with care, the way forward will open up steadily for everyone.

Wednesday Zoom Coffee mornings each week are open to all. They are a good opportunity to keep in touch, find out news, share your thoughts and listen to what other people have to say. If you would like to join us on Wednesday mornings (usually 10:30 am) please let Keith know. You will then receive a weekly invitation by email and can join in as and when you are able to. Our thanks go to Keith, Ian and Roger for hosting the coffee mornings. They are much appreciated.

Wantage

Morning Worship

Morning Worship is in the chapel and on Zoom. Services commence at 10:30 am. For the time being we will continue to have cautious Covid-19 disciplines to help keep everyone safe.

If you are going to attend the service in person, please would you let Ann Barber know in advance either via [email \[annbarber7@gmail.com\]\(mailto:email_annbarber7@gmail.com\)](mailto:email_annbarber7@gmail.com) or by telephone 01235 767152. This will assist us to fulfil our responsibilities to Track & Trace and limit congestion on arrival.

Please wear a face mask (unless you are exempt) and use hand sanitiser on the way in and out. If you have a smart phone, please scan the Covid QR code or tick your name on the list of those attending.

We shall see whether there is a way we can sing in church In the near future.

We are also considering how we can have refreshments before or afterwards.

We are conscious that for a variety of reasons not everyone will feel ready to return to church at this time. Reflective orders of service for use at home will continue to be sent out. The services from church will be Zoomed live for those who wish to join us from home. These transmissions will open at 10:15 and **it would help those hosting the service if people could log in before 10:28 please** so that you can be let in before the service starts. If you arrive later you could have to wait for the host to let you in while they deal with the start of worship and the first hymn.

We recognise that not everyone has access to internet facilities and even where they do, do not find Zoom works for them.

Pastoral

Ann Barber

The number of people worshipping in Church again has increased a little, but whilst many do not feel ready to return as yet, it is good to be able to share news of the members of our Church family through the Newsletter.

John Morton Deep concern surrounds John following serious operations that he has undergone at the JR Hospital. Our thoughts are with him and with Gill, and the rest of his family as they wait hopefully for signs of improvement in John's condition. We will continue to offer our prayers for them all, and hope that they will be strengthened and encouraged as they keep vigil over him.

Celia Roser We were sorry to learn that, a few weeks ago, Celia suffered a stroke and was admitted to the JR. Thankfully, she is making progress in her recovery, and is well enough to be transferred to Abingdon to benefit from rehabilitative care. At the time of writing, there is no bed available yet, but we wish Celia well, and offer her our love and prayer support.

Sharon Hayford The situation for Sharon has changed dramatically since writing about her in the previous Newsletter. It is her request that this information is shared with all of her church friends, such is her faith in our prayer support. Sharon's husband, Thomas, is critically ill in hospital in Accra, placing Sharon and her four children in an upsetting and anxious position. Unfortunately, the Ghanaian Health Service falls drastically short of our NHS provision. Everything has to be provided by the patients' families, including expensive medication administered within the hospital. In addition, Sharon prepares food which her children take to their father each morning, and, because of Covid, they must complete this errand by 5 am to be off the hospital site before the medical staff arrive. Sharon herself has just tested positive for Covid and so cannot visit her husband, but she is assured of our love and our prayers, and is so grateful for all the support which she trusts us to maintain.

Mary Trotter It is a joy to report that Mary has joined the ranks of great grandparenthood. Her granddaughter Emily has recently given birth to a son named Freddie, and we offer our warmest congratulations and good wishes to Mary and to all of Freddie's family

Joan and Ed Clipsham Another heart-warming item of church family news is that Joan and Ed are now half way between their Diamond and Platinum Wedding anniversaries. Last week, despite Ed's many health problems, they enjoyed being able to mark their 65th anniversary with a celebratory dinner for just the two of them at The Bear Hotel. We join in their thankfulness at having reached this milestone point in their marriage, and offer them our continuing love and support.

Praying for each other: In August the people listed below, who are on **Eileen Rennie's** pastoral list, will be included in the prayer time when all of the members of Eileen's House-group, meet to pray: Janet and Richard Browning, Charlotte Browning, Joan and Ed Clipsham, Sue Haithwaite, Jean Manners, Gill Morton and Gill and Gordon Skidmore. Also included will be Britzaida de Lozada and Barbara Porter who are not allocated to a specific Pastoral Visitor, but are prayed for as part of our extended church family

In addition to the names listed above, those in our church family, who through frailty or ill health can no longer worship with us on Sundays, will also be prayed for by name at Eileen's house-group.

Prayer list

Eileen Rennie

Loving God, we praise and thank you that you, that your living word speaks to us today to strengthen your whole Church and us as we move forward together proclaiming your love for all. Father, you have gathered each of us to your heart and our lives are held in your all-powerful hands. We pray that you will help us live in your light and way today and always in all we do and say. May your life sustaining love lead us to grow in faith hope and action. Amen.

Please pray for: Bethan Grant, Jane, Alan Bunn and family, Carol Mackinder, Emma Wright and family, Anne, Betty, Alex and Brian, June Coppock, Alastair Wright and family, Caroline, Adrian, Richard, June C., John Morton, Sharon and family, All at Bullingdon Prison, staff, prisoners and visitors, our Ministers, Deacon, Local Preachers and Worship Leaders, YMOSES, kids@church and Street Pastors. Those members of our church family who, through frailty or ill health, can no longer worship with us.

If you or the person/people you have put on the prayer list would still like to be in the Late Summer Newsletter, please let me know by **Friday 13th August** in order for me to meet the Newsletter deadline.

Telephone: 01235 224284, email eileenrennie@icloud.com (Please note change of email address)

Tuesday Afternoon House Group

Eileen Rennie

As we proceed through the summer months it is encouraging to hear of the wonderful roll out of the vaccine. However there is still concern over the rising numbers of daily cases. We will have mixed feelings about how we will tackle the way forward. A cautious approach is still sensible and we must do what we feel comfortable with.

We are pleased to say some of us have been meeting weekly in the Church Hall at 2 pm each week since 29th June. We are adhering to restrictions and meantime socially distanced and wearing masks. Initially we met to plan the way forward and have successfully arranged that. Each week we meet for our “prayer time” together and during July and August we have agreed to discuss the previous Sunday’s sermon. This got off to a very good start on Tuesday 13th July when Carolyn was leading the session. We start fully in September with studies already planned. Keith will still be coming to speak to the group once a quarter and we are very happy about this.

It is appreciated that some people may still not be ready to meet up in the group but they will be kept in the loop with what is happening and details of prayers can still be sent to them each week. We did decide last week that although further restrictions are lifted from 19th July we will continue to wear masks, sanitise our hands and socially distance. It is most important that we keep in touch with what is happening as situations can change quite rapidly and we may have to alter course. Remember there is no pressure for people to attend. Please let me know if there is someone or some situation you would like us to pray for.

We do all look forward to the time when we will all be meeting together again. In the meantime pleased be assured that you are all held in prayer.

If you have any queries you can contact me (Eileen Rennie) by telephone on 01235 224284 or email: eileenrennie@icloud.com. Please note the new email address.

Coffee on the Decking.

June and Alan Grunwald invite anyone passing by their house (1 Elm Tree Cottage, Grove Road) to drop in for coffee on their decking, which overlooks the Letcombe Brook in a "wildlife" (aka weedy) garden. Their decking will be open to visitors between **10 am to 12 noon** on **Mondays** from **26 July to 30 August**. All very informal and dependent on dry weather. If you are unable to walk to their house, please telephone June (760488) as a lift might be possible.

Knit & Chat

Carolyn Roche, 01235 764310

August already and hopefully some warm sunny days. That may mean less knitting getting done as I don't know about you but I can never knit when the weather is hot. Update on the green jumper that I am knitting is that it is now sewn together – Hurray! Now I have to tackle the V-neck using circular needles!! I will let you know next month if this is successful.

We will continue to meet in the hall during August. Despite wearing masks we are able to enjoy chatting to each other and those who wish to do so bring their own refreshment.

Do let June G know if you wish to join our Facebook group and keep a lookout for photos and news on the church website.

If you need wool, have any other queries or just fancy a chat do please call me.

Look forward to seeing you **2 August** and **16 August** at **2 pm**.

Community Drop In Café

Eileen Rennie

Lots of positive news still continues in the roll out of the vaccine. At time of writing over 87% of people in the UK have received their first dose and over 66% have received their second dose. It is particularly encouraging that so many young people are taking advantage of their opportunity to receive the vaccine. Having been patient thus far I am sure we will all be prepared to take the cautious approach for a little longer mindful of rising numbers of new cases.

As always it is good to be able to keep in touch with some of you through phone calls and also to see you when we are out for our daily exercise and now we may even be able to sit and chat a little longer. We know how much so many people are looking forward to the time when we can once again join together on Monday mornings for chat and refreshments. Pleased be assured that as soon as we can safely re-open we will let you know. You are all held daily in prayer.

When we are able to meet again the donations will be going to Clean Slate, a low cost, long term listening and support service for all victims of abuse and mental illness. Our sincere thanks to our willing volunteers waiting in the wings to be able to resume service again. They too have missed seeing your friendly faces and hearing your news. When normal service is resumed we look forward to welcoming you all back. For further information contact either Eileen Rennie or June Grunwald.

Users: Weekdays in the Hall

It is intended to bring things back into use in a controlled way. The programme for the next few weeks is as follows:

Saturday July 31st

Climate Cooking in the Hall all day

Mondays August 2th ,16th

Knit & Chat in the hall in the afternoon

Tuesdays in August

Tuesday Afternoon House Group in the Hall

Wednesday evenings

Wantage Stage Musical

Fridays in August

Community Larder in the Hall in the afternoon

Puzzles, Smiles & Groans

Psalm 23 – The Lord is my shepherd,

African proverb - The sheep will spend it's entire life fearing the wolf, only to be eaten by the shepherd.

What kind of car did the disciples drive?

A Honda ...because the Bible says they were all in one Accord.

When was the first tennis match mentioned in the Bible?

When Joseph served in Pharoah's court.

Who was the greatest financier in the Bible?

Noah – he was floating his stock while everyone was in liquidation.

How did Noah see inside the Ark?

He used floodlights.

What was Boaz like before he got married?

He was Ruth-less.

DIARY for AUGUST

- Monday 2nd 2:00 pm Knit & Chat in the Hall
- Saturday 14th 10:00 am Grove Coffee Morning in the garden of Linda and Mark Jones
- Sunday 15th DEADLINE for “Late Summer” NEWSLETTER**
- Monday 16th 2:00 pm Knit & Chat in the Hall

Services during AUGUST

- Sunday 1st 10:30 am Wantage (shared on Zoom) Rev Keith Underhill
 This service will include the sacrament of Holy Communion
10:45 am Grove Ian Sturt
- Sunday 8th 10:30 am Wantage (shared on Zoom) Peter Hemmings
10:45 am Grove Carol Sturt
11:00 am Childrey Helen Carter
- Sunday 15th 10:30 am Wantage (shared on Zoom) Ian Sturt
10:45 am Grove Rev Keith Underhill
 This service will include the sacrament of Holy Communion
- Sunday 22nd 10:30 am Wantage (shared on Zoom) Daphne Savage
10:45 am Grove Peter Hemmings
11:00 am Childrey Rev Keith Underhill
 This service will include the sacrament of Holy Communion
- Sunday 29th 10:30 am Wantage (shared on Zoom) Rev Keith Underhill
10:45 am Grove Libby Bolton